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Zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic

Zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic*

Report of the Secretary-General

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* The present report was prepared on the basis of replies from organizations and bodies of the United Nations system and Member States.

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I. Introduction

1. On 17 May 2013, the General Assembly adopted resolution 67/266, entitled "Zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic", in which it took note of the report of the Secretary-General (A/67/802) and requested the relevant organizations, organs and bodies of the United Nations system, and invited relevant partners, including international financial institutions, to render all appropriate assistance that States members of the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic may seek in their joint efforts to implement the Montevideo Plan of Action (A/67/746, annex II). The General Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to keep the implementation of resolution 41/11 and subsequent resolutions on the matter under review and to submit a report to the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session, taking into account, inter alia, the views addressed by Member States.

2. Pursuant to resolution 67/266, the Secretary-General addressed a note verbale, dated 10 June 2015, to the Governments of the States members of the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic requesting their views. On 12 June, letters were also dispatched to the relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations requesting them to submit, by 22 June 2015, their contributions for the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General.

3. As at 29 June 2015, one Government had replied and four contributions had been received from the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system. Those replies are reproduced in sections II and III of the present report. Any further replies received will be issued as addenda to the present report.

II. Replies received from Governments

Argentina

[Original: Spanish]

1. The active participation of Argentina in the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic bears witness to its commitment to the universal values of international peace and security, and to the sustainable development of the southern hemisphere.

2. In the area of mapping and exploration of the seabed, Argentina reports that its member of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf, established by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, is working together with the members from Brazil, Cameroon, Ghana and Nigeria, which are States members of the zone. The Commission members from Brazil, Ghana and Nigeria serve on the Subcommission that is considering the submission made by Argentina on the outer limit of the continental shelf. The Argentine member of the Commission serves on the Subcommission that is considering the submission made by South Africa.

3. Argentina stresses the importance of maintaining the zone free of nuclear weapons, a shared goal within the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations. In that regard, and in order to move forward with the implementation of resolution 41/11 and its follow-up resolutions, Argentina supported the draft resolution entitled "Nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere and adjacent areas", adopted during the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly of the United

Nations with 173 votes in favour, 4 against, and 3 abstentions; and reiterates its call for countries outside the zone to conduct themselves responsibly and to join the ban on introducing weapons of mass destruction into the South Atlantic.

4. Argentina is committed to seeking a region free of militarization and conflict, gives priority to the peaceful solution of disputes among States, combats the scourge of colonialism and desires the consolidation of the South Atlantic as a zone of peace and cooperation.

5. The formation of a Working Group on peacekeeping operations, as established in the Montevideo Plan of Action (2013), is of great importance to Argentina because it will provide an opportunity to strengthen cooperation among States members of the zone. In that regard, Argentina offers to organize and host the first meeting of that Working Group before the end of this year, taking advantage of the opportunity to extend discussions to the full range of subjects related to defence cooperation.

6. Aware of its responsibilities in the area of search and rescue in the South Atlantic, Argentina has begun the process of joining the Medium-altitude Earth Orbit Search and Rescue project. This project will enable the connection of new earth stations designed to receive data from medium-orbit satellites. This new system will also significantly improve distress alert reception times by ensuring a greater number of satellites and larger coverage area (Glonass — GPS — Galileo). Finally, the system will facilitate satellite triangulation to locate emergency radio beacons rapidly.

7. The Argentine Republic is committed to the protection and preservation of the marine environment, living marine resources and marine science. Consequently, it launched the *Pampa Azul* (blue pampa) initiative aimed at broadening scientific knowledge as the basis for conservation policies and the management of natural resources, and encouraging technological innovations applicable to the sustainable exploitation of natural resources. This research will lead to an understanding of the mechanisms that control local environmental conditions and their impact on production and biodiversity.

8. The specific goals of the initiative are to generate scientific products of excellence covering specific activities and reference points on three complementary levels: (a) prospecting, research and conservation activities; (b) technological innovation for marine industries; and (c) outreach activities aimed at the domestic and international audience. This initiative will also have an international cooperation element, encouraging international scientific relations.

9. On 19 November 2014, the National Congress passed Act No. 27,037 establishing the national system of marine protected areas, aimed at protecting and conserving marine spaces representative of habitats and ecosystems in light of the objectives of environmental policy related to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity.

10. The marine protected areas under the jurisdiction of the Argentine Republic are a fundamental and effective tool for conserving and sustainably using marine biodiversity. They are based on the implementation of ecosystem and precautionary approaches in the management of human activities in the oceans. They also, in a comprehensive and general fashion, address the threats to marine ecosystems. Our country has established 49 environmental protection areas along its coastline.

11. In addition, the national implementing authority will establish marine protected areas in the following categories, separately or combined, for each area. For example, the Namuncurá-Banco Burdwood marine protected area was identified in the framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity as an area of ecological and biological importance because it meets several of the criteria established in international regulations.

12. Finally, Argentina believes that more forums for cooperation among the States of the zone will be opened at the upcoming ministerial meeting in Cabo Verde.

Uruguay

[Original: Spanish]

1. Uruguay wishes to focus on the Seventh Ministerial Meeting of the Zone of Peace and Cooperation of the South Atlantic, held in Montevideo on 15 and 16 January 2013. At that meeting the Montevideo Declaration was adopted, reaffirming the South Atlantic as a zone of peace. It addressed a broad range of cooperation areas pertaining to the region of the South Atlantic and of great interest to the 24 countries of the zone. A Plan of Action was also adopted to implement the provisions of the aforementioned Declaration.

2. Those documents contained processes for implementing and improving cooperation among the members of the zone in such areas as defence, security, the environment, mapping and exploration of the seabed, expertise in determining the limits of the continental shelf, sustainable development, countering of transnational organized crime, peacekeeping operations and trade, in order to contribute to the development of member States and the well-being of their respective populations.

3. Uruguay assumed the presidency of the zone two and a half years ago and is preparing to hold a new conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defence at which a new ministerial declaration and a related plan of action will be adopted to continue to promote its objectives and develop the joint activities of its members, as well as to continue along the path embarked upon in Luanda in 2007. The presidency of the zone will be transferred at that conference to Cabo Verde, which will hold it for two years. It is our wish that the aforementioned conference should be held in the second half of this year.

III. Replies received from organizations and bodies of the United Nations system

Department of Public Information

1. The Department of Public Information mobilized its multilingual resources, both at headquarters duty stations and through its network of 63 United Nations information centres, in order to promote the Montevideo Declaration and Plan of Action in the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic.

2. Working with relevant departments, peacekeeping missions and special political missions, the Department activities focused in particular on the Declaration and key themes of the Plan of Action.

3. Its 10 United Nations information centres located in the South Atlantic region (Accra, Brazzaville, Buenos Aires, Dakar, Lagos, Lomé, Pretoria, Rio de Janeiro, Windhoek and Yaoundé) were particularly active. Over the past year, these offices carried out a diverse range of events in support of the Declaration and the Plan of Action, which included courses, lectures and briefings for students; press conferences; debates; live video-chats; radio programmes; interviews; press releases; placement of op-ed articles; exhibitions; conferences; and special websites.

4. In support of peace and security, for example, information centres around the world observed the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers. In 2014, Captain Mbaye Diagne, a United Nations observer who saved more than 100 lives during the Rwandan genocide before being killed, was honoured on the twentieth anniversary of his death at the information centre in Dakar. His widow and two children attended the ceremony, together with representatives of the Government of Rwanda.

5. In Johannesburg, the information centre in Pretoria marked the International Day of Peace by working with civil society on a rooftop music concert in the city centre. The event was streamed live over the Internet, and approximately 46,000 online viewers tuned in.

6. Staff members of the Department of Public Information provided training to their counterparts in the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, the United Nations Mission in Liberia and the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo on digital communications, social media and managing media campaigns.

7. The Department mobilized significant communications resources in response to the Ebola crisis, seconding staff when needed, and providing advice on communications matters to the Office of the Special Envoy for Ebola, and to the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER). The Department also provided support during the development and coordination of messaging together with communications staff of the United Nations system, and helped with media outreach and arranging interviews and briefings by United Nations senior officials. At the same time, the Department covered the response of the United Nations to the crisis across all its media platforms, including social media and traditional media. As part of that coverage, an audio slideshow of images was produced by a United Nations photographer documenting the work of UNMEER in Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone.

8. The information centres located in the South Atlantic region assisted in organizing information courses on disarmament. In observance of the International Day against Nuclear Tests, the information centre in Windhoek organized a mini Model United Nations simulation for students who debated nuclear testing. Thirty young people discussed the challenges and the impact of raising awareness on the issue.

9. The information centres were also active on topics related to international crime, such as human trafficking, by raising awareness through press conferences and the production of television and radio programmes, as well as through social media. In March 2015, the information centre in Accra, in collaboration with the United Nations information service in Vienna and the Crime Congress secretariat, organized a media briefing through WebEx for journalists in Ghana on the thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, which was held

in Doha in April 2015. About 25 Government and media representatives attended the briefing and received press kits.

10. Development and global governance have been key subjects for the information centres as Member States debate the shape and form of the post-2015 development agenda. Events included public briefings, seminars, report launches and observance of international days such as Africa Industrialization Day, International Day of Cooperatives, International Year of Small Island Developing States, International Anti-Corruption Day and Africa Day.

11. In the Republic of the Congo, the information centre in Brazzaville organized a quiz contest for 1,000 high school students on the subject of small island developing States. Winners received awards at a ceremony in December 2014.

12. In Brazil, the information centre in Rio de Janeiro and the Federal Museum of Justice organized an exhibition to mark International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and thè Transatlantic Slave Trade and to promote the United Nations Decade for People of African Descent.

13. The network of information centres in the South Atlantic zone carried out 41 events related to sustainable development during the past year, including World Environment Day celebrations, op-eds, seminars and exhibitions.

14. To mark World Environment Day, the Director of the information centre in Buenos Aires wrote an op-ed entitled "The real scandal about food", which was published in English by the *Buenos Aires Herald*, and in Spanish by *Clarin*.

15. In Namibia, in August 2014, the information centre in Windhoek, together with the University of Namibia, organized a lecture by the United Nations Resident Coordinator, that assessed and discussed the challenges, progress and achievements of millennium development goals in Africa.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

1. The assistance provided by the Fisheries and Aquaculture Department of FAO to States members of the zone to facilitate the implementation of the Montevideo Plan of Action is being carried out under the framework of its Blue Growth Initiative, which is of particular significance to small island developing States and to coastal areas and wetlands around the globe.

2. FAO continues to support the implementation of an ecosystem approach in a number of countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America through several projects. Some examples of relevance to the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic are provided below:

(i) The Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF)-Nansen project is an initiative to support the implementation of the ecosystem approach in the management of marine fisheries, mainly in Africa. To date, the project collaborates with more than 30 African coastal countries,[1] and 16 have finalized fisheries management plans coherent with the principles of EAF. The

[1] Twenty-one are from the zone: Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Cabo Verde, Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Liberia, Namibia, Nigeria, São Tomé and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Togo.

project also carried out a review on the implementation of EAF in national legislation in Africa;

(ii) A case study was implemented on the shared stocks of shrimp and groundfish fishery of the Guianas-Brazil shelf aimed at mainstreaming EAF into the management of the shrimp and groundfish resources;

(iii) FAO carried out reviews and supported the development of draft fisheries legislation, including most recently in Uruguay, in developing a law on responsible fisheries and aquaculture in accordance with EAF. Additional work on artisanal fishery has been undertaken.

3. FAO provides direct support on capacity development and technical assistance to many countries in the zone, and is heavily involved in a good number of projects in these countries. The work of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Department aimed at strengthening bivalve safety management in Angola and Namibia is a relevant example of the work conducted in the zone.

4. FAO continued to encourage States to ratify, accede to, approve and implement the 2009 Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing, which provides minimum port State measures, thus helping fight illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing if such measures were applied by port States in an integrated and harmonized manner. With support provided by Norway, the FAO Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture and the Development Law Service organized regional workshops to create awareness and develop the capacity of States to implement the Agreement. For example, there were global workshops attended by a number of participants from the zone, on monitoring, control and surveillance and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing issues for enforcement professionals, the latest one being held in Costa Rica in 2014.

5. FAO has continued to expand its capacity-building programme on the Agreement; enhance fisheries management and governance; promote long-term sustainability; and improve global food security. The programme activities are aimed at facilitating the entry into force of the Agreement and its implementation. In addition, the activities contribute to the development of national capacity to maximize the benefits available through the effective use of the Agreement and to promote bilateral, subregional and/or regional coordination. Brazil and Uruguay participated in a regional workshop held in Montevideo in 2014. The next workshop is scheduled to be held in Cabo Verde from 20 to 24 July 2015.

6. With regard to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction, FAO continues to support the implementation by States and regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements of the international guidelines for the management of deep-sea fisheries in the high seas through a project in which the Southeast Atlantic is one of the focal areas and the Southeast Atlantic Fisheries Commission one of the key partners. In December 2014, the database on vulnerable marine ecosystems was launched. The database was developed in collaboration with the regional bodies with mandates to manage deep-sea fisheries in areas beyond national jurisdiction and provides interactive maps and factual information on management measures taken to reduce current or potential impact on areas where vulnerable marine ecosystems are known or likely to occur, including for the South East Atlantic

Fisheries Organization. In January 2015, a survey with *R/V Dr Fridtjof Nansen* in the area covered by that organization was conducted to assess key fisheries resources and provide additional information on vulnerable marine ecosystems.

7. FAO developed technical guidelines on marine protected areas and fisheries in 2011 and has conducted regional workshops in the western Indian Ocean, South-east Asia and the Canary Current regions to bring the fisheries and biodiversity communities together to discuss common issues in relation to spatial management measures.

8. In 2014, the FAO Committee on Fisheries expressed appreciation for the collaboration with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in extending its ship identification number scheme to fishing vessels and agreed that the IMO number should be used as the unique vessel identifier of the Global Record of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels for vessels of 100 gross tonnage and above. Moreover, the Committee noted that several regional fishing management organizations had made provisions for the IMO number to be compulsory in their convention areas, some of which are in the South Atlantic. Several countries of the South Atlantic area have been actively participating in the design, development and implementation of this tool.

Office for Disarmament Affairs

1. The Office for Disarmament Affairs has cooperated with members of the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic in the promotion of its objectives, including the Montevideo Plan of Action. In the area of weapons of mass destruction, the Office provides support for activities relevant to the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). The efforts of the Office in this area are currently focused on enhancing cooperation between international, regional and subregional organizations and supporting regional approaches, as well as promoting engagement with civil society. Of the 24 members of the zone, 19 States have submitted their first report to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004).

2. In March 2014, the Government of Gabon hosted a workshop on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) for French-speaking Member States, which was supported by the Office through its Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa. Similar workshops were held in South Africa in April 2014 and Togo in June 2014 for English- and Portuguese-speaking Member States, respectively, with support from the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa. Regional organizations play an important role in promoting the full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). In this regard, the Office continues to pursue opportunities to enhance cooperation with States members of the zone on this issue.

3. The Office also promotes greater adherence to multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation treaties, as well as their fuller implementation, in the zone. A number of members of the zone have signed, acceded to or ratified multilateral disarmament treaties and conventions since 2013. All members of the zone are States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and have actively participated in its review process, especially the 2015 Review Conference held in New York from 27 April to 22 May, and the three sessions of its Preparatory

Committee held in Vienna in 2012, in Geneva in 2013 and in New York in 2014. Since February 2013, three additional members of the zone — Angola, Republic of the Congo and Guinea-Bissau — have ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.[2] All members of the zone have signed the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and all but three have ratified it.

4. As at May 2015, 52 States had signed the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Pelindaba) and 39 had ratified it. Since February 2013, two additional members of the zone — Angola and the Republic of the Congo — have ratified the Treaty. Of the 21 African member States of the zone, 20 have ratified the Treaty.[3] In May 2014, the Third Conference of States Parties to the Treaty was held in Addis Ababa. The conference was attended by the States parties to the Treaty, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization and the Forum for Nuclear Regulatory Bodies in Africa, and it reviewed the activities of the African Commission on Nuclear Energy.

5. All three South American members of the zone are States parties to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco).

6. All members of the zone except Angola are States parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. Nineteen members of the zone are States parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, and two more members of the zone have signed the Convention. These members of the zone actively participated in the review processes of the two Conventions, particularly the Third Review Conference of the Chemical Weapons Convention, held in 2013, and the 2012-2016 intersessional programme established by the Seventh Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention.

7. The Office has also supported the efforts of members of the zone in the field of conventional weapons, particularly promoting multilateral instruments to control small arms and light weapons. It has assisted Member States, including members of the zone, with policy formulation and evaluation on the implementation of such instruments, as well as the negotiation and entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty.

8. The Office has assisted Member States with the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. It has also provided support to States in the organization of the Fifth Biennial Meetings of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action in June 2014 and its Open-ended

[2] In accordance with article XIV of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the Treaty enters into force after all 44 States listed in Annex 2 to the Treaty have ratified it. Of the 44 States whose signature and ratification are required for the Treaty to enter into force, the following 8 States have yet to ratify it: China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, India, Islamic Republic of Iran, Israel, Pakistan and the United States of America.

[3] The following countries of the zone are currently States parties to the Treaty of Pelindaba: Angola, Benin, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Togo.

Meeting of Governmental Experts in June 2015. All State members of the zone participated in those processes.

9. As at 22 June 2015, 130 States had signed the Arms Trade Treaty and 69 States had ratified it; 21 members of the zone have signed the Treaty and 9 States — Argentina, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Uruguay — have ratified it.[4]

10. The Office has also supported a range of regional and subregional efforts to enhance peace and security in the zone. The Economic Community of West African States Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Other Related Materials was adopted by the Heads of State and Government on 14 June 2006 in Abuja, and entered into force with the deposit of the ninth instrument of ratification by Benin on 29 September 2009. As at May 2014, the following eight countries of the zone had become parties to the Convention: Benin, Cabo Verde, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. In addition, four more members of the zone — Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Guinea and Guinea-Bissau — have signed the Convention.

11. The Central African Convention for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, their Ammunition and all Parts and Components that can be used for their Manufacture, Repair or Assembly (Kinshasa Convention) was negotiated within the framework of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, and unanimously adopted on 30 April 2010 in Kinshasa. It aims at combating the illicit trade and trafficking in Central Africa of small arms and light weapons. Since February 2013, Cameroon has ratified the Kinshasa Convention, which brought to five the total number of countries that have ratified the Convention, which will enter into force upon the sixth ratification thereof.

12. During the reporting period, there has been limited progress by members of the zone in promoting international humanitarian law. No member of the zone has acceded to the Convention on Prohibition or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminative Effects or to any of its five protocols. There has been no accession by any member of the zone to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on their Destruction. However, three additional countries of the zone — Republic of the Congo, Guinea and South Africa — have, since February, ratified the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

13. There have been limited efforts in promoting transparency in armaments in the zone during the reporting period. While all three South American members of the zone have actively participated in the United Nations transparency instruments, only three African States reported their military data to the United Nations. In 2013 and 2014, four States — Argentina, Brazil, South Africa and Uruguay — reported their transfers of conventional arms to the United Nations Register of Conventional

[4] As at 22 June, in addition to the 9 States parties that had ratified the Arms Trade Treaty, the following 12 member States of the zone had signed the Treaty: Angola, Benin, Brazil, Cameroon, Cabo Verde, the Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Namibia, São Tomé and Príncipe and Togo.

Arms. In the same period, four members of the zone — Argentina, Brazil, Senegal and Uruguay — reported their military expenditures to the Secretary-General.

14. The Office supports various efforts in the zone through its regional centres in Africa and in Latin America and the Caribbean, providing assistance in disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation activities to States and regional organizations in the zone throughout the reporting period.

15. Through the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, the Office provides substantive support on disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation issues to the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa. The Regional Centre is providing support to Central African States in the updating and harmonization of their national legislation on the control of small arms and light weapons.

16. The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean also provides States and regional organizations in the zone with capacity-building, technical assistance and outreach and advocacy activities to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, as well as armed violence.

17. The Office, through the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, participated in 2013 in a seminar on the theme "The South Atlantic Geostrategic Scenario, Sovereignty and Natural Resources in the Twenty-First Century", and provided substantive input in relation to peace, security, arms control and disarmament issues in the South Atlantic. In 2014, the Office, through the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, provided policy and substantive advice to a regional event in Tierra del Fuego, Argentina, in the framework of the zone. The three-day event brought together experts and governmental representatives to discuss issues related to the implementation of the Luanda Action Plan and the Montevideo Declaration. Special emphasis was placed on peace and security issues, including arms control and disarmament, as well as urban security.

Office of Legal Affairs

1. The Office of Legal Affairs, through its Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, provides assistance to States by undertaking a variety of capacity-building activities in the field of oceans and the law of the sea and by providing information and advice on the uniform and consistent application of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out and which is of strategic importance as the basis for national, regional and global action and cooperation in the marine sector. The Division also serves as the secretariat for the Convention and the Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the

United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982[5] relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks. In addition, the Division services the General Assembly processes that deal specifically with ocean issues.

United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

2. The year 2014 marked the twentieth anniversary of the entry into force of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, to which all States members of the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic are parties.

3. Among the main contributions of the Convention to the preservation of peace in the oceans is the clarity that its provisions have provided to the delineation of maritime zones. In this regard, of particular relevance is the role of one of the institutions established under the Convention, namely the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf. One of the functions of the Commission is to consider the data and other material submitted by coastal States concerning the outer limits of the continental shelf in areas where those limits extend beyond 200 nautical miles, and to make recommendations thereupon. The vast majority of States members of the zone have been actively engaged in the process of delineation of the outer limits of their continental shelves. As at 31 May 2015, the Commission had received submissions made by Angola, Argentina, Brazil, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa and Uruguay, as well as the Joint Submission by Cabo Verde, the Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, Senegal and Sierra Leone, in respect of areas in the Atlantic Ocean adjacent to the coast of West Africa, which represents an example of South-South and triangular cooperation. In addition, the Republic of the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, São Tomé and Príncipe and Togo deposited preliminary information indicative of the outer limits of the continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles and a description of the status of preparation and intended date of making a submission to the Commission.[6]

4. The importance of the process of delineation of the outer limits of the continental shelf was recognized by the ministers of the zone in the 2013 Montevideo Plan of Action, which encouraged cooperation and collaboration among the States members of the zone towards the implementation of their obligations under article 76 of the Convention.

5. The Montevideo Plan of Action also emphasized the importance of the international seabed Area for the States members of the zone.

6. In this connection, it is recalled that the Area is the seabed and ocean floor and subsoil thereof, beyond the limits of national jurisdiction. The Convention declared

[5] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1833, No. 31363; a vast majority of the States members of the zone are also parties to the Agreement relating to the implementation of Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1836, No. 31364). A number of them are also parties to the Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2167, No. 37924).

[6] For a list of submissions made to the Commission see: www.un.org/depts/los/clcs_new/commission_submissions.htm; for a list of preliminary information deposited with the Secretary-General see: www.un.org/depts/los/clcs_new/commission_preliminary.htm.

the Area as "common heritage of mankind" (art. 136). With regard to this maritime zone, the provisions of the Convention are complemented by those of the Agreement relating to the implementation of Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982, to which the majority of States members of the zone are party.[7] However, all States members of the zone are also members of the International Seabed Authority by virtue of their participation in the Convention. The Authority is the institution established by the Convention to administer the mineral resources of the Area; to adopt rules, regulations and procedures for the conduct of activities in the Area; to promote and encourage marine scientific research in the Area; and to protect and conserve the natural resources of the Area and prevent damage to the flora and fauna of the marine environment. Among relevant areas under exploration are the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, for polymetallic sulphides, and seamounts in the South Atlantic, for cobalt-rich ferromanganese crusts.[8] In particular, the Plan of Action encourages the participation of scientists from institutions in developing countries in marine scientific research being undertaken in the Area by international research organizations. In this connection, trainees from Brazil, Ghana and Senegal have benefited in the past from training at sea in the context of activities conducted by contractors of the Authority.

7. Equally notable is the comprehensive mechanism for the peaceful settlement of disputes contained in Part XV of the Convention, which requires States to settle any disputes between them concerning the interpretation or application of the Convention by peaceful means. If parties to a dispute cannot resolve their dispute through bilateral means, the Convention gives them a choice among four means for the settlement of disputes, entailing binding decision, namely, the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, the International Court of Justice, arbitral tribunals established under annex VII to the Convention or special arbitral tribunals with expertise in specific types of disputes, established under annex VIII to the Convention. Over the years, several disputes have been settled by recourse to these mechanisms, and many others have been deterred by the existence of such mechanisms. States members of the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic have resorted to both the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea and arbitral tribunals established under annex VII for a number of cases.

8. The Tribunal also rendered an advisory opinion in response to the request submitted by the Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission (case No. 21) on 2 April 2015. The Commission consists of seven member States, six of which are States members of the zone. The advisory opinion concerns, inter alia, obligations and liability of the flag State and international organization with regard to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activities, as well as rights and obligations of the coastal State in ensuring the sustainable management of shared stocks and stocks of common interest.

United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement

9. The year 2015 marks the twentieth anniversary of the opening for signature of the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement. The Secretary-General convened an

[7] Angola, Argentina, Benin, Brazil, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Guinea, Liberia, Namibia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Togo and Uruguay.

[8] See www.isa.org.jm/contractors/exploration-area.

event to commemorate the anniversary on 17 March 2015 during the eleventh round of the informal consultations of States parties to Agreement. In this regard, the Division organized a round-table discussion featuring two segments, involving presentations and a general discussion among participants. The participants included representatives of States parties to the Agreement, States non-parties and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations invited to attend the eleventh round of informal consultations in accordance with General Assembly resolution 69/109.

10. With this resolution, the General Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to resume the Review Conference, convened pursuant to article 36 of the Agreement, at United Nations Headquarters for one week during the first part of 2016, with a view to assessing the effectiveness of the Agreement in securing the conservation and management of straddling fish stocks and highly migratory fish stocks. In this regard, pursuant to the relevant General Assembly resolutions, the tenth and eleventh rounds of informal consultations of States parties to Agreement were held in 2014 and 2015, respectively.[9] The eleventh round of informal consultations served primarily as a preparatory meeting for the resumed Review Conference. Furthermore, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to the resumed Review Conference an updated report, prepared in cooperation with the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and in this regard requested the Secretary-General to develop and circulate to States and regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements a voluntary questionnaire regarding the recommendations made by the Review Conference in 2006 and 2010, in a timely manner, taking into account the specific guidance proposed at the tenth round of informal consultations.

General Assembly

11. The General Assembly annually reviews developments relating to ocean affairs and the law of the sea in the context of its consideration of the resolutions on oceans and the law of the sea and on sustainable fisheries. In addition, the Assembly has established a number of processes for a more in-depth consideration of certain aspects of ocean issues that are of direct relevance for the zone. They include the Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea; the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole on the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socio-Economic Aspects, and the Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction.

12. Notably, the above-mentioned Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group completed its work in January 2015 by making recommendations to the General Assembly. In that regard, the Assembly decided to develop a legally binding instrument under the Convention on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction and, to that end, established a preparatory committee, which will meet in 2016 and 2017, to make substantive recommendations to the Assembly on elements of a draft text of an international legally binding instrument under the Convention.

[9] As at 31 May 2015, the following members of the zone were parties to the Fish Stocks Agreement: Brazil, Guinea, Liberia, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa and Uruguay.

13. The seventh workshop, in support of the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects, was held under the auspices of the United Nations in Grand-Bassam, Côte d'Ivoire, from 28 to 30 October 2013. Alvaro Ceriani, of the Permanent Mission of Uruguay to the United Nations, represented the zone, which co-organized the workshop with the Office of Legal Affairs and the United Nations Environment Programme Abidjan Convention Secretariat, in partnership with the Government of Côte d'Ivoire. The report of the workshop (A/68/766, annex) provided critical information for the first global integrated marine assessment (the "World Ocean Assessment") relating to South Atlantic region information gaps and capacity needs for marine assessments in the region. The first global integrated marine assessment will be considered by the Ad Hoc Working Group in September 2015 and subsequently by the General Assembly.

14. The Assembly also addresses fisheries issues through its annual resolution on sustainable fisheries. In particular, the Assembly has addressed some of the fisheries issues covered by the Montevideo Declaration and Action Plan.

15. Notably, in 2014, the Assembly decided to conduct in 2016 a further review of the actions taken by States and regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements in response to resolutions 64/72 and 66/68, with a view to ensuring effective implementation of the measures therein and to make further recommendations, where necessary. In this regard, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to convene a two-day workshop in the second half of 2016 in order to discuss implementation of the relevant paragraphs of resolutions 64/72 and 66/68. It also requested the Secretary-General to prepare a report in cooperation with FAO, for consideration by the Assembly at its seventy-first session, on the actions taken by States and regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements in response to relevant paragraphs of resolutions 64/72 and 66/68.

16. A number of other issues have been addressed in the annual resolutions of the Assembly on sustainable fisheries. The Assembly, inter alia, called for a number of actions to address illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. Related to this, the Secretary-General submitted a written statement to the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea in the advisory proceedings concerning "Request for an advisory opinion submitted by the Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC)".

17. In a number of paragraphs in its annual resolutions on sustainable fisheries, the Assembly called upon regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements to take actions as stipulated therein. In this regard, it is noted that there are several such organizations and arrangements in the South Atlantic.

Capacity-building activities of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea

18. Through its capacity-building activities, the Division has assisted a number of States members of the zone to further the goals set forth in the Luanda Final Declaration and Plan of Action. Since 2008 this assistance has included:

(a) Award of fellowships, with a view to providing opportunities for advanced education and training in the field of ocean affairs and the law of the sea,

and related disciplines, including marine science, to Government officials and other mid-level professionals from developing States;[10]

(b) Financial assistance to facilitate the preparation of submissions to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf;[11]

(c) Financial assistance to attend meetings or sessions of several bodies serviced by the Division, including those of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf[12] and the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea;[13]

(d) Financial assistance for travel-related expenses associated with participation in global or regional meetings on fisheries matters, capacity-building activities and human resource development in the fishing sector, as well as for costs related to settlement of dispute proceedings between States parties concerning the interpretation or application of the Fish Stocks Agreement.[14]

19. In addition, the Division provides information on various issues of mutual interest for member States of the zone, as outlined in the Luanda Final Declaration and Plan of Action, by virtue of its role as Secretariat of the Convention. In this connection, training activities on various aspects of the Convention were conducted in South Africa in 2007, in Namibia in 2008 and in Argentina and Angola in 2011. The Division also participated in the second regional meeting of the Steering Committee of the West Africa Regional Fisheries Programme, held in Praia in 2012.

20. The Division has also developed a training programme on the implementation of the relevant provisions of the Convention on marine scientific research.

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[10] Fellows have included individuals from Benin, Brazil, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gambia, Ghana, Namibia, Nigeria, São Tomé and Principe and Sierra Leone.

[11] Financial assistance was provided to Angola, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Namibia, Nigeria, São Tomé and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo and Uruguay.

[12] Financial assistance was provided to facilitate the participation of members of the Commission nominated by Cameroon, Ghana and Nigeria.

[13] Financial assistance was provided to facilitate the participation of delegates or panellists from Brazil, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Nigeria and Togo.

[14] Brazil, Guinea, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa and Uruguay have received financial assistance from the trust fund, administered by FAO and the Division between 2009 and 2014.